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SUBJECT: DEFENSE MINISTER DESCRIBES GCC DISCUSSION OF
BAHRAIN-BASED COUNTER-TERRORISM CENTER

Classified By: Ambassador Richard LeBaron for reasons 1.4(b) and (d).

(C) The Ambassador met with First Deputy Prime Minister Shaykh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah, who currently holds the Defense and Interior portfolios as well, on May 31 and asked about the May 22 - 24 GCC Interior Ministers' meeting in Abu Dhabi. The Minister noted it was an informal session with no set agenda, but there was consideration of establishing a permanent center in Bahrain to fight international terrorism.

He reported that there was an ongoing effort to get all relevant GCC governmental bodies to cooperate on the center, and that an MOU had been signed to facilitate the exchange of views among GCC members on the center. The Ambassador asked if this was different from the international terrorism center Saudi Arabia had proposed. The Minister said that the Saudis supported a center in Bahrain, (but it was not clear if these were two different proposals).

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